

**drinkaware**

**Impact Report 2019**

# **Scotland: Sharpening our focus**



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# 1. Foreword from the Chief Executive

This 2019 impact report marks the halfway point in an ambitious five-year strategy. It showcases the work Drinkaware has done to strengthen our focus on people in Scotland most at risk from alcohol and highlights our growing understanding of harmful drinking behaviours.

Alcohol misuse is pervasive in the UK and a complex issue to address. While in Scotland there has been a gradual decline in hazardous and harmful drinking, many continue to drink at levels harmful to their health. We recognise that action must be taken on a number of fronts if we are to reduce alcohol-related mortality and ill-health in Scotland and across the UK, and that people who drink more than the low risk drinking guidelines are among the most resistant consumers to change.

Drinkaware hopes to contribute to widen efforts to reduce alcohol harm through targeted social marketing interventions, aimed at these consumers. We use advertising, communications and in a number of pilot sites, community-based interventions to raise awareness, to engage people with our messages and to inform people of the serious health risks of regularly drinking more than the low risk drinking guidelines. Having attracted people to our website, Drinkaware offers a portfolio of digital tools to help people assess their drinking; set goals to change or seek local help and support.

As our understanding of drinking habits, motivations and occasions continues to grow, we sharpened our focus in 2019 towards those who are drinking in harmful ways, the professionals who help them and friends and family around them. We have continued to commission robust evaluations of our activity and in this year's report, set out a variety of measures, including first-hand accounts from our initiatives, to demonstrate the difference we make.

In 2019 Drinkaware reached more than half a million people in Scotland (9 million across the UK) through our website and social media, and of the 1.2 million people across the UK who used our online tools to better understand the impact of alcohol on their lives, more than 80,000 were in Scotland. This huge reach gives us an insight into drinking habits that is quite unparalleled, and we are committed to sharing the results of our evaluations to support thought-leaders, policy makers and anyone concerned by alcohol harm.

Drinkaware recognises the different policy context in Scotland and that in this context, alcohol education and appropriate signposting have a role to play in supporting individuals to change behaviour. Through building greater awareness of alcohol harms and partnership working, Drinkaware can help increase the impact of, and political mandate for, policy interventions.

Writing this in 2020, I am more aware than ever of the importance of the work Drinkaware does. We are yet to fully understand the extent of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on alcohol use, but the need to continue to reach those most at risk of harm, with relevant, compelling and accessible information and support is likely to be greater than ever.



**Elaine Hindal**  
Chief Executive – Drinkaware

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## 2. Drinkaware in numbers

In 2019, we reached a large audience in Scotland with our digital channels:

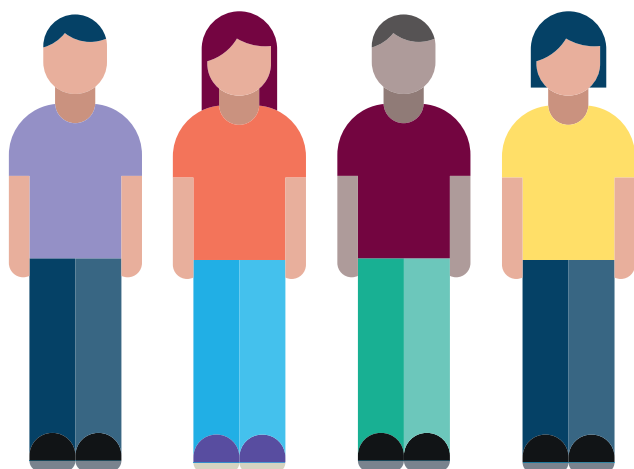
**450,144**

users visited our website  
[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)<sup>1</sup>

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**46,432**

visited our website via our  
social media channels<sup>2</sup>



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And significant numbers  
of people took action:

**37,160**

people completed the Drinkaware  
Unit and Calorie Calculator<sup>3</sup>

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**30,314**

completed our DrinkCompare Calculator<sup>3</sup>

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**19,481**

people completed our alcohol self-  
assessment, an online test based on the  
World Health Organisation's Alcohol Use  
Disorders Identification Test<sup>3</sup>

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**3,792**

users pledged to reduce their unit intake  
by a total of **69,082** units<sup>3</sup>

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**2,882**

pledged to take more drink-free days<sup>3</sup>

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**1,442**

downloaded the Drinkaware app

We also interacted with  
more than **1,500** people  
in communities and in  
workplaces through  
Drinkaware's initiatives  
and partnerships<sup>4</sup>

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## 3. Key trends



In Scotland, there has been a gradual decline in hazardous and harmful<sup>5</sup> drinking since 2011 (from 28% to 24%).<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the proportion of adult non-drinkers has gradually increased. Data from the Scottish Health Survey indicate that 16% of adults in Scotland never drink alcohol, an increase from 14% in 2011.<sup>6</sup> While this is a welcome trend, a significant proportion of the population in Scotland are continuing to drink at levels harmful to their health. Our own 2019 Drinkaware Monitor data indicate that almost one-third (29%) of adults in Scotland fall into the ‘increasing risk’ category of the AUDIT-C<sup>7</sup> measure in relation to their drinking, with 15% defined as ‘higher risk’ drinkers.<sup>8</sup> Men are more likely to exhibit risky drinking behaviours than women, with approximately half (51%) classified as ‘increasing’ or ‘higher risk,’ compared to just over one-third of women (35%).<sup>8</sup> Similarly, hazardous and harmful consumption is prevalent among the older age groups (55–64 among men, and 45–54 among women).<sup>6</sup>

“

Almost one-third (29%) of adults in Scotland fall into the ‘increasing risk’ category of the AUDIT-C measure in relation to their drinking.

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“

This disparity between men and women is also reflected in alcohol-related harm. Alcohol-specific deaths continue to be twice as high for men than women.

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This disparity between men and women is also reflected in alcohol-related harm. Alcohol-specific deaths continue to be twice as high for men than women (762 males deaths compared to 364 deaths in 2018).<sup>9</sup> Similarly, men are more than twice as likely than women to be admitted to general acute hospitals for alcohol-related conditions (971 per 100,000 population compared to 377 in 2018/19).<sup>10</sup> More broadly, while Scotland is the only country in the UK to have witnessed a significant decline in alcohol-specific deaths compared to the previous decade, the rate of deaths per 100,000 population remains the highest in the UK (at 20.8 per 100,000).<sup>11</sup>

The burden of alcohol harm is greatest among those living in the most deprived areas, despite a greater proportion of this population drinking at lower levels of hazardous and harmful consumption than those living in the least deprived areas.<sup>12</sup> More must be done to understand and to address this important health inequality.



# 4. Implementing our strategy

Understanding key audience segments and working closely in partnership with other organisations has not only allowed Drinkaware to reach large numbers of people in Scotland, but also allowed us to target our activities and interventions effectively towards those who are most at risk of harm from drinking to encourage them to drink in less harmful ways.

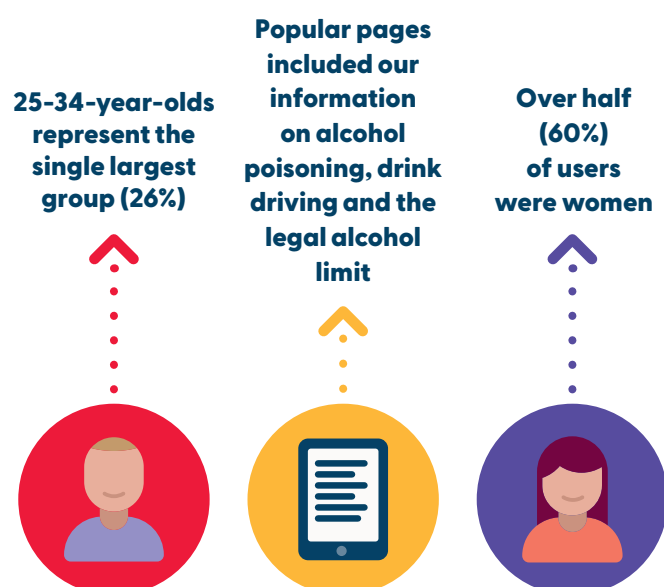
In 2019, across the UK, Drinkaware engaged well over 9 million people through our website and social media, and supported more than 1.2m people to develop personal strategies to reduce harmful drinking. In Scotland we engaged with more than 450,000 visitors from a broad age range to the Drinkaware website.

As in 2018 the majority of our website's visitors from Scotland are under 44 years of age, with 25-34-year-olds representing the single largest group (26%). Over half (60%) of users were women.<sup>13</sup> Popular pages included our information on alcohol poisoning, drink driving and the legal alcohol limit.<sup>14</sup>

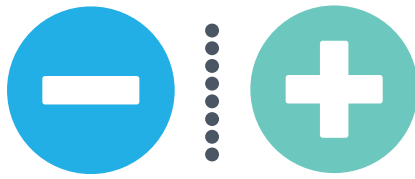
Our website tools continued to help people understand the risk alcohol poses to their health and were the most visited pages in 2019. More than 19,000 people in Scotland completed our online alcohol self-assessment test (based on the World Health Organisation's Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test). The Drinkaware Unit and Calorie calculator was completed by 37,160 during 2019, evidence of the continued interest in calories in alcohol and an important part of our offer given the importance of obesity to a range of underlying health conditions with which alcohol is associated.

Furthermore, the Drinkaware app was installed 1,442 times<sup>3</sup> in 2019. Despite its relative age and the growing number of drinks tracker apps available both Android and iOS platforms, this app continues to prove the growing interest in tools that can help people monitor their drinking and support them digitally to make a change.

## Our website visitors







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30,314 completed the DrinkCompare Calculator to compare their drinking to UK averages while in September 2,882 used the calculator to pledge to take more drink-free days.

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Encouraged by targeted social media campaigns, 30,314 completed the DrinkCompare Calculator to compare their drinking to UK averages while in September 2,882 used the calculator to pledge to take more drink-free days.<sup>3</sup> This tool, which uses social norms to challenge perceptions about what is acceptable or usual alcohol consumption, was improved in September 2019 to provide moderation strategies to help reduce risky drinking behaviours and to encourage frequent or daily drinkers to commit to reduce their alcohol use.

In addition to our digital resources, in 2019 we partnered with the Scottish Football Association and worked with Walking Football Scotland to engage with walking footballers and provide them with tools, resources and information to help them better understand their drinking. We also formed a partnership with the Scottish Alcohol Industry Partnership (SAIP) in a project designed to deliver alcohol awareness training for small and medium sized enterprises across Scotland.



Drinkaware watched the evolving policy landscape in Scotland with interest and acknowledges the World Health Organisation's position on key influences on alcohol consumption and the 'best buys' of price, ease of purchase and the social norms around alcohol consumption. In this context, we believe alcohol education and appropriate signposting have a key role to play in supporting behaviour change and helping reduce alcohol harm. We continue to support Scotland's growing efforts to address the considerable harm that can be caused by alcohol on both individuals and society more widely.

# 5. Effectively reaching people through our partnerships

## Identification and Brief Advice in supermarkets

2019 was the third year of a Drinkaware partnership with national supermarket Asda to deliver Identification and Brief Advice (IBA) in 100 of its stores across the UK. Scratch cards were used to engage Asda shoppers in a conversation about the risks of alcohol to health and to provide tips to help shoppers change their drinking behaviour.

Shoppers were also given a unit measure cup and calorie counter wheel to support alcohol moderation at home.

Drinkaware trained Asda employees, using the *Drinkaware at Work* e-learning modules, equipping them to talk confidently with shoppers about alcohol. Trained ASDA ambassadors engaged directly with more than 437 Asda shoppers in five Asda stores in Scotland during the two-day activity.



## Walking football in Scotland

Drinkaware continued its research partnership with walking football in Scotland that was launched in October 2018 with the support of The Scottish Football Association. Drinkaware provided alcohol education resources for participants and through 2019/20, is collecting longitudinal data to determine the impact of these resources on drinking behaviours. The results of the programme will be reported on in 2020/21.

## Case study

Tom\* is 46 years old and lives in Dundee. Before joining the walking football team, Tom used to drink three or four cans of lager every night at home, as well as a glass of wine two to three nights a week. Here, Tom talks about how his relationship with alcohol has changed since joining the walking football team and having access to Drinkaware's resources.

*"Alcohol is not something that I feel I needed; it was just something I did. Drinking was something I did out of boredom. Now, I fill my diary with things to keep me out of the house at night, and luckily, it has been through playing walking football."*

*"I started playing to get me active again. I saw a photograph of myself and really noticed a change in my appearance, which I knew was down to the drinking. It was like a trigger to change."*

*"Most of my drinking revolved around watching football, but now, instead of having a few tins per half, I will limit myself to one per 45 minutes. I will also have a bottle of water on the table to 'water down' my beers and limit my lager intake. I have never bought water before from the shops, but often upon coming home now I drink water, as opposed to a beer, which I was having previously. These simple little steps are helping me and the fact that I am doing it in moderation makes it easier."*

Drinkaware's resources *"heightened my awareness to what I was drinking... until Drinkaware, I never thought about this. The [unit measuring] glass and the [unit and calorie] wheel make you aware of how much you drink."*

*"The way the information was given to us was great. If it had been a sit-down approach, I would probably have switched-off from what I was being told. Giving us the opportunity to take the information away and read it at our own leisure gave us, as participants, the choice. I have read it and it made a difference as a result of it."*

*"I am more alert now and have noticed a massive difference in my energy levels, which I think is related to the decrease in drinking. I go to the gym and have started playing five-a-side football again, as well as participating in more walking football sessions. These activities have naturally taken me away from drinking at night as I'm out participating, instead of sitting in the house drinking. In terms of the social side, I have a bigger group of friends and have extended friendships as a result of playing the game."*

*"Also, because I was able to make changes in my drinking habits, I have found similar steps have made it easier to change my eating habits as well. Both lifestyle changes have had a positive impact on my general health and my mentality."*

*"I feel better for the changes I have made and have more energy and a better focus in my life now. I won't ever change completely, as I enjoy a beer, but maybe by cutting down, I will enjoy them more when I do get them!"*

\* Not his real name.



The way the information was given to us was great.



## Focusing on the workforce: *Drinkaware at Work*

Alcohol is the world's number one risk factor for serious ill health and premature death among 25 – 59-year-olds, the working population.<sup>15</sup> *Drinkaware at Work* supports employers to include alcohol alongside other health and wellbeing, or health and safety, education provided to employees. The training is designed to provide engaging, impartial advice to help employees make better choices about alcohol and support employers to recognise alcohol's potential impact in the workplace.

In 2019, *Drinkaware at Work* was accredited by the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) service and by the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH).

During 2019 we worked with several large and small employers in Scotland to provide awareness and education sessions to their employees. In total we reached 955 employees through our *Drinkaware at Work* programme. Almost one third of those who attended agreed the *Drinkaware at Work* sessions encouraged them to try and cut down on their drinking in the future.<sup>16</sup>



In total we reached 955 employees through our *Drinkaware at Work* programme.



We successfully delivered face-to-face alcohol awareness training to 170 front line employees from West Lothian Council. Margaret Walker, Project Lead, West Lothian Council, was delighted we were able to engage with a cohort of employees that were deemed as typically hard to reach. Margaret said: *“The sessions were very insightful and interesting and we have given a few people some valuable tips and food for thought.”*

We also formed a partnership with the Scottish Alcohol Industry Partnership (SAIP) which is designed to support the health and wellbeing of employees primarily from small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

Through this partnership we reached 475 employees with 31% of attendees agreeing that the sessions convinced them to try and cut down on alcohol intake in the future.<sup>16</sup>



The sessions were very insightful and interesting and we have given a few people some valuable tips and food for thought.



# 6. Distell: a *Drinkaware at Work* case study

Employees at East Kilbride spirits producer, Distell, received a number of *Drinkaware at Work* training sessions throughout 2019. With a focus on the wellbeing of bottling plant operatives, sales staff as well as head office teams, we delivered in-person group sessions to 400 employees.

The training served not only to support individuals with education about alcohol for their own health, but also to support teams with information and practical advice on managing alcohol consumption in workplace settings, such as at events or team socialising.

## Follow-up e-learning

In addition to the group sessions, recognising the value of reinforcing learning and development, Distell asked its employees to complete the *Drinkaware at Work* e-learning course within ten weeks of attending the in-person training.

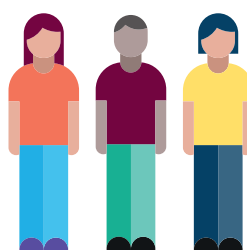
## Train the trainer approach

To support new employees, and provide extra awareness sessions in-house, Drinkaware delivered a 'train the trainer' course for 10 members of Distell's own internal team.

### Testimonial

"We are delighted with the impact the *Drinkaware at Work* training has had. We are proud to be seen as leaders in the industry regarding responsible drinking."

**Anne McQueen, Communications Manager**  
Distell





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# 7. About Drinkaware



Drinkaware is an independent alcohol education charity which aims to reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking. We do this by providing information and practical resources and by raising awareness of alcohol and its harms. Working directly with public sector bodies and private sector organisations, Drinkaware offers workplace training as well as programmes for staff in bars and clubs so they can spot and support people at risk from alcohol harm. We also provide information resources to healthcare professionals and educators, insight and research to government and alcohol advice sessions in community venues like supermarkets.

The Drinkaware Trust is a charity, registered with the Charity Commission and the Scottish Charity Regulator, and governed by a board of independent Trustees, chaired by Sir Leigh Lewis KCB, in accordance with its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The Board of Trustees each bring relevant expertise to the operations of Drinkaware and act with full independence. The Board directs the work of the charity, and delegates authority to three sub-committees covering Finance and Human Resources, chaired by the Treasurer; Risk and Audit chaired by a trustee (currently by David Ward), and Research and Impact, chaired by a trustee (currently by Dr Timothy Walker).

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The Research and Impact Committee provides support and guidance for Drinkaware's work and ensures that our activity is based on the best available evidence. The Committee oversees robust evaluation and determines whether our resources and efforts are being effectively applied. This impact report has been reviewed and approved by the Research and Impact committee, comprising:

**Dr Timothy Walker**

Chair of the Committee and Drinkaware Trustee, former Fellow of both the Institution of Engineering and Technology and the Institute of Physics

**Professor Patrick Barwise**

Emeritus Professor of Management and Marketing, London Business School

**Dr Colin M Hunter OBE FRCPEd FRCGP**

Former Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners, former GP

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**Observer**

**Dr Fiona Sim OBE**

Independent Chief Medical Advisor to Drinkaware, former Chair, Royal College of Public Health, GP

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# 8. Drinkaware funders

We would like to thank our funders for their support and commitment in 2019:

Accolade Wines Ltd  
Admiral Taverns Ltd  
Aldi UK  
Armit Wines  
Asahi UK  
ASDA Stores Ltd  
Aspall Cyder Ltd  
Aston Manor  
Bacardi Brown-Forman Brands  
Beam Suntory  
Berry Brothers & Rudd  
Bestway Retail  
Booker  
Bourne Leisure  
Brakspear  
Broadland Wineries  
Brothers Drinks Co  
Budweiser Brewing Group UK&I  
C&C Group plc  
Campari UK  
Carlsberg UK Ltd  
Casella Family Brands (Europe) Ltd  
Cellar Trends  
Celtic Marches Beverages Ltd  
Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte  
Cider of Sweden (Kopparberg)  
Concha y Toro  
Continental Wine & Food  
Conviviality Retail  
Corinthian Brands Ltd  
Costco  
Daniel Thwaites plc  
Diageo Great Britain Ltd  
Distell International  
E & J Gallo Winery Europe

England & Wales Cricket Board  
Enotria Wines  
EI Group  
Everards Brewery Ltd  
Freedom Brewery  
Frederic Robinson Ltd  
Fuller Smith & Turner plc  
Gen!us Brewing  
Glen Turner Company Ltd  
Global Brands  
Goedhuis & Co  
Gordon & Macphail  
H Weston & Sons  
Halewood  
Hall & Woodhouse  
Hallgarten & Novum Wines  
Harrods  
Harvey & Sons  
Hatch Mansfield  
Heineken UK  
Hippodrome Casino Ltd  
Hi-Spirits  
Hook Norton  
Ian Macleod Distillers  
Ideal Wine Company  
Inver House Distillers Ltd  
J Chandler (Buckfast) & Co  
JD Wetherspoon plc  
JW Lees & Co (Brewers)  
Kato Enterprises  
Kingsland Wines  
Laithwaite's Wine (Direct Wines)  
Laurent-Perrier  
Liberty Wines  
Lidl

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Lion-Beer, Spirits & Wine (UK) Ltd  
Loch Lomond Group  
London & Scottish International Ltd  
Louis Latour Agencies  
Maisons Marques et Domaines  
Majestic Wine Warehouses Ltd  
Marks & Spencer plc  
Marston's plc  
Mast-Jagermeister UK  
Masters of Malt  
Matthew Clark Bibendum Ltd  
McCormick Distilleries USA  
McQueen Gin  
Mitchells & Butlers plc  
Moet Hennessy UK Ltd  
Molson Coors Brewing Company UK  
Morrison & Mackay Ltd  
Negociants UK  
NUS Services  
Nyetimber  
Oakham Ales  
Origin Wine  
Pernod Ricard UK  
Pinnacle Drinks  
Pol Roger  
Proximo Spirits UK Ltd  
Punch Taverns plc  
Quintessential Brands  
QVC  
Racecourse Association  
Rude Wines  
Rugby Football Union (Twickenham)  
Remy-Cointreau  
Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd

Shepherd Neame Ltd  
SHS Drinks Division  
Southwestern Distillery  
Spar (UK) Ltd  
Spendrups Bryggeri AB  
St Austell Brewery Company Ltd  
Tesco plc (inc One Stop Stores Ltd)  
TGI Friday's  
Thatchers  
The Co-operative Group  
The Deltic Group  
The Drinks Company  
The Edrington Group Ltd  
The Haciendas Company  
The Reformed Spirits Company  
The Restaurant Group  
The Wine Society  
Theakston  
Treasury Wine Estates  
Two Tribes Brewing  
Virgin Trains West Coast  
Wadworth & Co  
Waitrose Ltd  
Warner Edwards Distillery Ltd  
Wells & Co  
Whitbread  
Whyte & Mackay Ltd  
Wickwar Brewing Company  
William Grant & Sons  
Wilkin & Son Ltd  
WM Morrison Supermarkets plc  
Woodforde's Brewery  
Young & Co's Brewery P.L.C

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# 9. References

- 1 Unique users via *Google Analytics*.
- 2 Total referral traffic from social media channels via *Google Analytics*.
- 3 Unique Events via *Google Analytics*. Some duplication due to users potentially using multiple tools.
- 4 437 people took part in our Alcohol Brief Advice programme which was delivered in 100 ASDA stores across Scotland, 955 employees received alcohol training through our *Drinkaware at Work* programme and 129 walking football participants received our support and resources
- 5 Defined as drinking in excess of the Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines of 14 units a week. Figures have been revised for 2003 to 2014 in line with these new guidelines.
- 6 Scottish Government. (2020). *The Scottish Health Survey. Chapter 3: Alcohol*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2018-volume-1-main-report/>. [Accessed 20 February 2020].
- 7 The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT-C) is a three-question alcohol screening test that identifies individuals drinking at hazardous levels. A risk score is determined by the following brackets: 'low risk' (scoring 0-4 through the AUDIT-C questionnaire); 'increasing risk' drinkers scoring 5-7, and 'higher risk' drinkers scoring 8-12.
- 8 Gunstone, B. and Samra, S. (2019). *Drinking behaviours and peer pressure in relation to alcohol: Drinkaware Monitor 2019*. London: YouGov and Drinkaware. Available at: <https://media.drinkaware.co.uk/media/novbxssv/drinkaware-monitor-2019-peer-pressure-final.pdf?v=0.0.9>. [Accessed 3 August 2020].
- 9 National Records of Scotland. (2019, June 26). *Alcohol deaths*. Available at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/alcohol-deaths>. [Accessed 3 August 2020].
- 10 ISD Scotland. (2019). *Alcohol-related hospital statistics Scotland 2018/19*. Available at: <https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Drugs-and-Alcohol-Misuse/Publications/2019-11-19/2019-11-19-ARHS-Report.pdf>. [Accessed 3 August 2020].
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- 12 Giles, L., and Richardson, E. (2020). *Monitoring and Evaluating Scotland's Alcohol Strategy (MESAS)*. Public Health Scotland. p.12. Available at: <http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/3103/mesas-monitoring-report-2020.pdf>. [Accessed 3 August 2020].
- 13 Demographic data via *Google Analytics*.
- 14 Unique Users via *Google Analytics*.
- 15 European Commission Scientific Opinion of the Science Group of the European Alcohol and Health Forum. (2011). *Alcohol, work and productivity*. Brussels, European Commission. Available at: [https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/16211/1/science\\_02\\_en.pdf](https://www.drugsandalcohol.ie/16211/1/science_02_en.pdf). [Accessed 27 March 2020].
- 16 Based on Drinkaware's course evaluation surveys completed by all participants





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## About Drinkaware

Drinkaware is an independent charity working to reduce alcohol misuse and harm in the UK. We're here to help people make better choices about drinking.

### Drinkaware

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